INDIA TODAY
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INTERACTIVE MAGAZINE



# CAMERA FOR ACTION!



**ACTION CAMERAS ARE GAINING POPULARITY.**
THE BEST ACTION CAMERAS IN THE MARKET.



INDIA TODAY GROUP
DCP No. F.2(I/I) Press/2009




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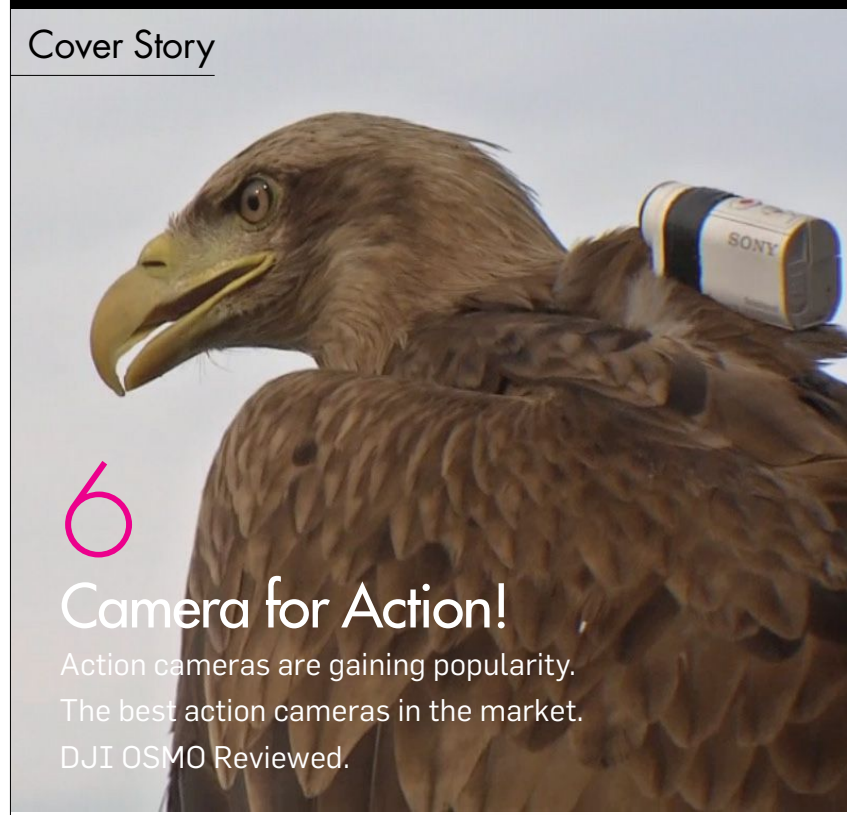
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# @helpGG

**Q** **I WANT TO BUY A FLAGSHIP SMARTPHONE AND MY BUDGET IS ₹50,000. CAN YOU SUGGEST WHICH ONE TO BUY? I WAS WAITING FOR THE IPHONE 6S LAUNCH, BUT CAN'T STRETCH MY BUDGET TO ₹62,000.**

**BHAWANA GUPTA,** on e-mail

**G&G** The price of iPhone 6s 16GB has been dropped from ₹62,000 to ₹49,499 on online portals such as Flipkart. So you can go ahead and buy the iPhone. Else, you can also consider the Galaxy S6 and Galaxy S6 Edge that were launched earlier this year. The recently launched Nexus 6P is priced at around ₹40,000 and is a device worth considering.

**Q** **DOES IT REALLY MAKE SENSE TO SPEND MONEY ON A PERSONAL NAVIGATION DEVICE? HOW GOOD IS GOOGLE MAPS THAT WE HAVE ON OUR SMARTPHONES? CAN IT GUIDE ME ON HIGHWAYS TOO?**

**RAVI JOSHI,** on e-mail

**G&G** Be it in a city or on highways, Google Maps works really well. It even offers live traffic updates. While it works well in online mode, Google has recently launched an offline mode. Just invest in a universal mount to mount your smartphone on the windscreen, which will cost you ₹150, and a good car charger that continues to add juice to your smartphone..

**Q** **I WANT A HIGH-SPEED INTERNET CONNECTION AT HOME. SHOULD I BUY A WIFI DONGLE AS IT WILL LET ME ACCESS INTERNET ON THE MOVE? SPEED AND PLANS ARE MOST IMPORTANT. DO SUGGEST.**

**ASHOK KHANNA,** on e-mail

**G&G** If you need internet only at home, a broadband connection will be a good idea as you get high-speed internet and better plans. Airtel offers 25 GB of data on 8 MBPS for ₹1,399. WiFi dongles do not offer such good speed or plans. You can never be sure of high speed data connectivity on the move.

## HELP AT HAND

**Having trouble with your laptop? Would like to boost your cell phone's capabilities? Want advice on what camera is best for your needs? Write to us with all your queries and we will have experts answer them.**

Email us at **helpGG@intoday.com**

# LETTERS




### Living in Luxury

I really enjoyed reading the cover story on 'Smart Home' that was covered by Gadgets & Gizmos recently. To think that such fancy rooms that we see in five-star hotels can be installed at homes too, albeit at a huge cost! I think, in a few years, all this will become mainstream. Most of the new constructions from builders will have such facilities retrofit in the new apartments.-

**DR DEEPAK KAPOOR,** on e-mail

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# MOTOROLA MOTO 360
## (2nd Gen)

Unveiled at IFA in Berlin in September this year, the Moto 360 (2nd Gen) will be launched in five variants in India – three metal and two leather. Of the five variants, the three variants for men will be available in cognac, black leather and black metal. Motorola is also launching two variants for women in blush leather and natural metal. The new watches will come in two sizes – a 46 mm design and a 42 mm for a sleeker look. The second generation models come with an improved design along with a standard lug design that facilitates changing bands. There is a new high resolution display and a faster 1.2 GHz Qualcomm Snapdragon 400 quad-core processor, along with a bigger battery. The display is protected by Corning Gorilla Glass 3. The Moto 360 also features accelerometer, ambient light sensor and gyroscope, a heart-rate sensor and IP67 certification that makes it resistant to dust and water.

**₹19,999 ONWARDS**

## MICROSOFT LUMIA 950, 950 XL

Microsoft has launched two smartphones in India – the Lumia 950 and the Lumia 950 XL for ₹43,699 and ₹49,399, respectively. These are the first Windows smartphones to run on the Windows 10 operating system. The Lumia 950 features a 5.2-inch WQHD (2560×1440 pixels) AMOLED ClearBlack display and Corning Gorilla Glass 3 protection. It is powered by a 1.8 GHz Snapdragon 808 hexa-core processor, paired with 3 GB of RAM. It has 32 GB internal storage expandable up to 2 TB using a memory card. It is equipped with a 20 MP PureView rear camera with triple LED flash. It can capture 4k videos and has a 5 MP wide angle front-facing camera. This is a dual-SIM smartphone with LTE support and 3,000 mAh battery. The Lumia 950 XL has a 5.7-inch display and is powered by a 2 GHz Snapdragon 810 octa-core chipset paired with 3 GB of RAM. It comes with Corning Gorilla Glass 4 protection, a 20 MP rear camera, a 5 MP front-facing camera and a 3,340 mAh battery.

**₹43,699; ₹49,399**




## XIAOMI MI PROTECT INSURANCE SERVICE

Xiaomi India has launched an insurance service for Mi smartphone and tablet users in India. The Mi Protect service, available for Xiaomi devices, can be purchased from mi.com. Mi Protect offers accidental and liquid damage cover. It also offers free home pick-up and drop, and free second servicing within one year from activation. Other benefits include 24X7 call centre support to report damages, two repairs, one call to block your SIM from anywhere in the world, SIM misuse insurance cover of up to ₹3,000, smartphone assistance to resolve all your Mi phone related queries and docu-safe of up to 1 GB to store and access important documents. Mi Protect is available for Redmi 2 and Redmi 2 Prime for ₹275, on Mi 4(16 GB), Mi 4i and Mi Pad for ₹499.

## ALTEC LANSING WATERPROOF MINI H2O

A well-known name in the audio space, Altec Lansing has re-entered the Indian market with its 'Everything Proof' audio range. The new portfolio includes both Bluetooth speakers and headsets. The waterproof Mini H2O speaker has been priced at ₹3,600 and features AUX and Bluetooth for connectivity and mic for speaker phone capability. It has a range of 33 feet and up to six hours of battery backup. The Mini Lifejacket 2, priced at ₹8,000, and Lifejacket 2, priced at ₹14,000, have similar features with better battery life. The latter even supports NFC and voice commands. The headphone range starts from ₹3,350 and goes up to ₹7,999 for wireless ones. Altec Lansing plans to introduce high-end home audio solutions in India next year. **₹3,600**




## SNAPDEAL AUTOMOBILE PLATFORM

Snapdeal has announced the launch of Snapdeal Motors – an exclusive automobile platform allowing customers to browse through automobiles, avail test drives and choose from a host of easy financing options and documentation support. Using this platform, one can get loan approvals in two minutes. At the time of launch, Hero MotoCorp and Piaggio were available on the platform. The e-commerce giant plans to bring Mahindra, Suzuki and Datsun on board soon. Accessible on web, mobile and app, Snapdeal Motors allows customers to choose the colour, check on-road price and choose dealers based on proximity and delivery date. Customers then pay a booking amount and choose from loan options. The company will soon introduce 'Test Drive at Home' and 'Doorstep Delivery' options.



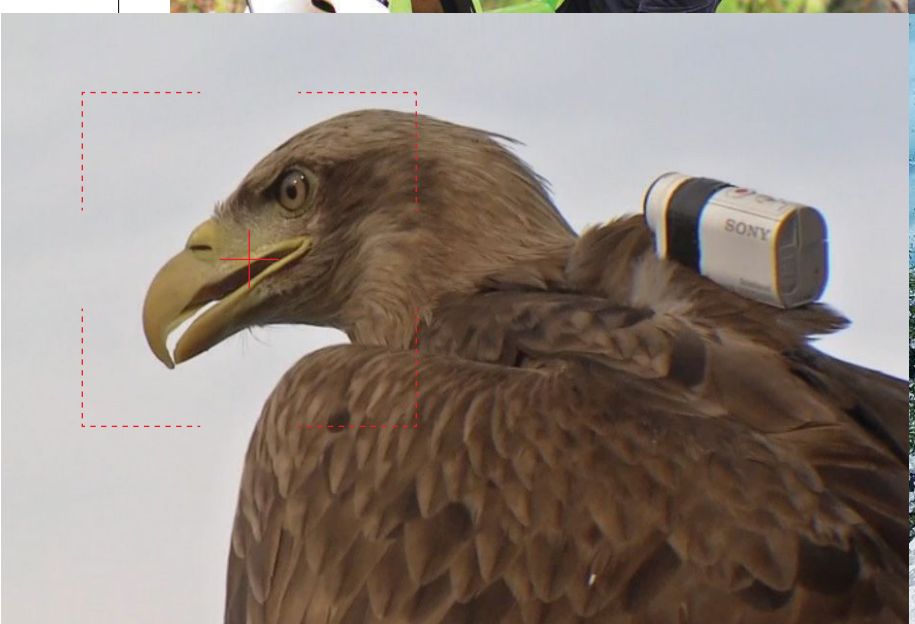

## TOSHIBA E-STUDIO 2802AM

Japanese technology giant Toshiba has announced the launch of its multi-function printers (MFP) in India. Of the five printers launched, the e-STUDIO 2802AM series claims to bring convenience and cost efficiency to smaller businesses and work groups as two MFP in this range are A4 size compact MFP that can produce A3 size output prints. Toshiba has a total of 27 models in its portfolio including 11 colour and 26 monochrome MFPs. These new MFPs that enable A3 output print will be priced at ₹35,000 onwards. It enables A3 output print by using built-in stack feed bypass and also enables A3 size paper scanning with its built-in Reversing Automatic Document Feeder (RADF).

**₹35,000 ONWARDS**

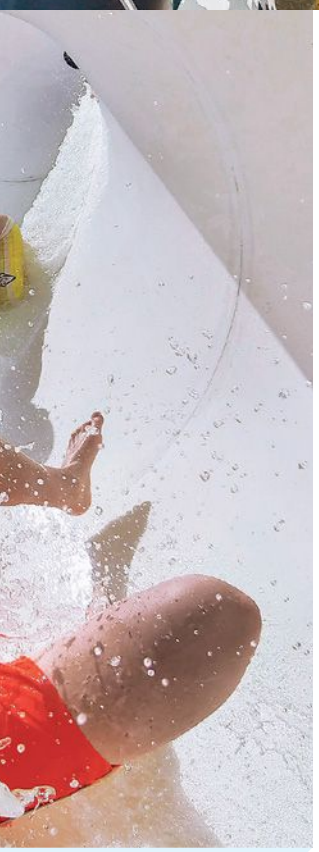





SONY







# CAMERA FOR ACTION!

## Action cameras are gradually gaining popularity. By Nidhi Singal

**EVER NOTICED** someone using a block shaped compact camera mounted on their helmet, hand or bike for capturing videos? These compact cameras are called action cameras, or action cams, and are turning out to be the next big thing in the technology space. Also referred to as GoPro by many, these action cameras are used to capture extreme sports, action and adventure videography. Almost a decade ago, Nick Woodman, Founder and CEO of GoPro, came up with a mountable camera to film himself while surfing. Even though there are plenty of action cameras in the market, GoPro has been the leader in this space.

Action cameras are designed especially to capture professional quality videos, over still images. Frame rates plays an important role while capturing action and these cameras can offer up to 60 or even 120 frames per second. Most of these action cameras can capture full HD footage; the new-age action cameras are capable of capturing 4k videos too. Unlike traditional cameras that



one has to carry in a backpack, most of the action cameras are waterproof and can withstand sudden fall and shock. If not, there is a special casing available as an accessory that will make it work well in extreme conditions without any damage.

"Action cameras are used to capture extreme action sports or activities. These cameras can capture high-speed and high-quality images. Regular cameras are incapable of capturing high-speed actions and are not designed for rugged conditions, including extreme weather. By contrast, action cameras are compact, lightweight, designed for rugged conditions and can be worn or mounted on vehicles. They are waterproof, shockproof and freezeproof, allowing users to capture stills and videos in tough conditions. Action cameras are widely used by adventure sports enthusiasts, travellers, bikers and filmmakers," says Manoj Kumar, Managing Director and CEO, Ricoh India.

The use of action cameras is not just restricted to capturing action videos or sports activities, but also for capturing videos at weddings and large-event gatherings. The cams are mounted on drones or hand-held accessories on such occasions. Easy to transport, action cameras are being used by professionals for their video assignments too. Anant Dwivedi, CEO, Smoove, a Mumbai-based production house, explains, "95 per cent of the times, I use a video camera as it gives more control to the creator, including lens options, exposure settings and, of course, better quality. But, to get those different and unique camera angles where a video camera cannot be mounted or where you don't have hands-on control, an action camera would be a better choice. Action cameras are meant to be small, mountable and free of user interface, but lack lens mounting options, exposure control and video monitor, amongst many things." Above all, one doesn't need any expertise or special skills to handle an action camera.

According to a report by FutureSource, the worldwide action camera market grew by 44 per cent, year on year, in 2014, reaching 7.6 million units, with a retail value of $3.2 billion. This report, which tracks annual volume, value and average price from 2013 to 2019, forecasts continued growth, in both volume and value, up to 2019 and beyond. In India, however, action cameras are still at a nascent stage. While professionals are investing in this category, not all are aware of what an action camera really is. At the moment, they are not easily seen in stores, as they are mostly available in professional video or photography stores due to scant demand. "According to the information shared with Snapdeal by its partners, the current market size of action cameras is around 3,500 units/month based on forecast from major players, with an average selling price of ₹14,000-15,000," says Rahul Taneja, Vice President, Category Management, Snapdeal.

The most popular name in this space, GoPro, is readily available on online channels as well as professional photography stores. A GoPro ac-





tion camera comes at a premium, but is not the only brand present in India. HTC launched its Re action camera in India last year. Brands such as Garmin, SJCam and Yashica are also listed on online portals such as Flipkart, Snapdeal and Amazon. Recently, Ricoh launched its Theta M15 360-degree spherical camera for ₹29,395, which was followed by the Polaroid Cube launch. Xiaomi's Yi action camera is a more affordable option, but has not been officially launched in India.

The price difference between the costs of the action camera available abroad and in India is huge. Sridharan Narayan, Vice President, consumer services, Regalix India, the authorised licensee of Polaroid products in India, informs, "The import duty on imaging products is very high in India. The import duty and taxes end up increasing the price of the action cameras in India." For instance, the Polaroid Cube has been listed at $99 on Amazon, whereas its India price is ₹9,099. The GoPro Hero 4 Black, retailing for $499, is being sold for ₹42,490 in India on Flipkart.

Although niche, there is an increasing demand for action cameras in the Indian market. "We are witnessing growing interest from photography enthusiasts for this product category. Selection for action cameras and related accessories has increased by over 500 per cent from March to October, 2015, on Amazon.in. Sales of action cameras, though still a small fraction of the total camera sales, has grown by over 300 per cent. From April to October, 2015, the number of glance views for action cameras increased by over 500 per cent. Accessories for action cameras are also seeing healthy sales. As action cameras come with basic accessories, there are varied accessories like mounts, grips and housings that are available, to utilise the camera to the fullest. The world's leading brand Go Pro is the best-seller on Amazon.in," says Noor Patel, Director - Category Management, Amazon India.

But, action cameras aren't going to replace video cameras. Snapdeal's Taneja says, "An action camera is synonymous with convenience and durability, and is largely used for capturing videos. Action cameras currently contribute less than 10 per cent of the total camera sales, by volume; however, we expect it to reach around 13-15 per cent by next quarter."

Action cameras are gaining popularity amongst professionals too, but it still has stabilisation issues. The next wave will be of action cameras installed on gimbals. A recent example is that of the DJI OSMO, which comes with a 4k action camera installed on a motorised gimbal for capturing shake-free or clear videos.

The demand for action cameras has been primarily coming from consumers playing extreme sports. But in the coming years, professional sales is expected to grow with a lot of demand coming from TV production and law enforcement agencies. Around 86 per cent of action camera sales last year came from consumers, and the rest from professional users, according to a report from FutureSource. However, the current demand in India is being driven by professionals, with consumers warming up to the idea of investing in an action camera for capturing recreational and special moments.

# Best Action Cameras in the Market

## GoPro Hero 4 Black

GoPro has been the leader in the action camera space. Every year, GoPro launches a new action camera and the industry follows suit. The GoPro Hero 4 Black is the best action camera in the company's portfolio that can capture 4k videos and has superb slow-motion video capture. It works flawlessly while capturing videos in cloudy weather conditions, indoors, bright sunlight or at night. Usually, action cameras are not good at capturing still images, but the stills captured by its 12 MP camera on board are praise-worthy. While it is the best action camera available in the market today, it does come at a steep price of ₹42,000.

**₹42,000**







## GoPro Hero 4 Silver

While the GoPro 4 Black can capture videos in 4k resolution, the GoPro Hero 4 Silver can capture videos in full HD resolution. The other features remain the same. This makes it a lot cheaper than the GoPro Hero 4 Black.

**₹34,990**



# Xiaomi Yi

This is one of the most affordable action cameras in the market, but yet to be officially launched in India. It can capture full HD videos, but doesn't come with a lens cover or waterproof casing. It has to be operated using a smartphone app that works well on iOS and Android smartphones

# Garmin VIRB XE

Known for its navigators, Garmin also manufactures some of the best action cameras in the market. The VIRB XE is its smallest action cam which captures great images and videos. It may not be able to match the standard set by GoPro or Sony, but it is the next best. Most of the accessories of GoPRo don't fit in other action cameras, but the Garmin VIRB XE, using an adaptor, can be mounted on the GoPro mount. It captures wide angle footage in MP4 format in full HD resolution at 60 frames per second. It has built-in Garmin GPS, G-force and orientation sensors that capture high speed, rotations and fantastic big air jumps.







# Sony X1000V

Sony isn't actively talking about its 4k action cam, X1000V, yet it is listed for ₹39,990. Counted amongst one of the best action cams available in the market, it actually competes against the GoPros. It captures professional quality 4k videos at 30p high bit rate and has an ultra wide 170-degree angle ZEISS Tessar F2.8 Lens. Its splashproof (IPX4), shockproof and dustproof body makes it a robust camera fit for carefree usage.

**₹39,990**

# SJCAM SJ4000 WiFi

Available for purchase on Flipkart and Aamzon, this one too offers 1080p videos at 30fps and has got features such as manual image and video control. It can be controlled using the remote or through an Android or iOS device through WiFi connectivity.



Cover Story

# Goodbye Shaky Videos

## DJI's action camera gimbal, OSMO, is worth the money..



Action cameras are aplenty, but the need to capture shake-free videos is giving way to camera stabilisers also referred to as gimbals. Chinese drone marker DJI has now launched a camera mounted gimbal called OSMO. It comes mounted with a camera capable of capturing 4k videos, but doesn't have a viewfinder. For this, there are clamps on the side where the smartphone can be mounted. It also has a three-axis gimbal along with an ergonomic handle with control buttons. When turned on, OSMO creates its own Wi-Fi network. The DJI app (installed on Android or iOS smartphone) when connected on the OSMO WiFi directs one to the gimbal features. On entering the camera view, it gives you an option to switch between still or video recordings. Basic settings include white balance, ISO and exposure.

While capturing videos, you can switch to 4k video or full HD resolution. Within the video interface, there is a slow-motion option for capturing 1080p video at 120 fps. In still interface, there are options such as single, multiple, time lapse and panorama. To capture still images or videos, you don't have to rely on the phone's touch display; you can use the dedicated button on the gimbal.

The highlight of the OSMO is its motorised gimbal functionality. The gimbal is locked in three different places to prevent it from unexpected damages. To start using the camera, one has to unlock the same. Mastering gimbal controls is relatively easy as the thumb automatically rests on the joystick at the rear





**DJI OSMO**
₹62,990

**Rating:** 5/5

**Plus:** 4k camera, Stabilisation

**Minus:** NA

and can be easily used to access the shutter button. The joystick helps in motorised movement of the camera and in controlling the speed. There is also a trigger at the front where the forefinger rests. Pressing the button once locks the position for moving the hand while capturing the video. Double clicking it brings the camera to the centre, whereas tapping it thrice quickly turns the camera for selfies. All the motorised movements are smooth and the stabilisation helps in capturing blur-free videos. A fully charged battery lasts for 60 minutes. Priced at ₹62,990, the OSMO does seem slightly expensive, but it is a one-stop solution.




# Magic of Cube

Action cameras are small and compact, but the Polaroid Cube beats them all with its size. The Cube is a really small camera that you can hide in your fist, measuring only 35 X 35 mm. It can capture full HD videos and still images.

The camera module faces the front, while the micro USB port, memory card slot and the recording mode switcher are hidden at the rear. There is a single operation button with an LED indicator at the top. There is a built-in magnet at the bottom which helps in mounting it on almost any surface. The single button on the top when pressed once powers it on. When pressed once after, it cap-



**POLAROID CUBE**

₹9,099

**Rating:** 4/5

**Plus:** Size, Magnet mount

**Minus:** Lacks display

tures a still image at 6 MP resolution and when pressed twice starts recording video. The LED indicator turns red and starts building while recording a video. From the rear, I was able to switch between 1080p video and 720p video. While the operation of the Cube is simple, there isn't any viewfinder. This means you can never be sure about what you are capturing. The footage can be checked only when it is transferred to a laptop or a tablet. But the magnet comes in really handy to mount on a bike, car or even a dog strap. It can even be mounted on a golf stick to record the action. Even the casing in the box can be stored and used as a mount.

While the Cube is fun to use, the videos captured look good on a small display and are great for sharing online. However, when viewed on a full screen, the quality is compromised. The videos are not as sharp and crisp as offered by other action cameras. There is a built-in mic on the Cube, but, somehow, the videos captured did not have any sound. The low-light videos lacked details and the same was true when the Cube was used indoors. While the still images looked decent with visibly good colours, you will notice noise when the images are blown to 100 per cent. The noise issue persists in stills shot in low light conditions too.

This compact Cube packs in a battery that can last for 90 minutes. The battery is non-removable and you cannot exchange it with a new one when it is completely drained.

# Changing Colours

Mood lighting is gaining a lot of traction these days. I still remember the Philips Living Colors range offering table lamps with over 16 million changing colours that was launched a couple of years ago. The company recently launched its Hue lighting range with the starter kit priced at around ₹17,000, comprising three LEDs. But, it is the Cube26's IOTA Lite LED bulb that does a great job at a much affordable price.

**SET-UP:** The IOTA Lite is a small 7W LED bulb which is easy to set up and doesn't require any additional equipment. It can easily fit into an existing LED or CFL holder. If you have an older fitting, a connector can be purchased without spending much. Just fix the bulb in the holder, install the IOTA Lite application on your smartphone and turn on the bulb. It will start illuminating in white colour.

**PAIRING**: The IOTA Lite bulb pairs over Bluetooth 4.1 and doesn't require any Wi-Fi connectivity for pairing. The app instantly searches IOTA Lite bulb and pairs with a single click. Interestingly, up to seven such bulbs can be operated and controlled using an app on a single device.

**FUNCTIONALITY:** IOTA Lite is one of the best examples of mood lighting where you can choose from 16 million colours. There is a



G&G●●●●●

IOTA LITE
₹1,499

**Plus:** Colours, LED, Price

**Minus:** : App needs improvement

colour palette from which you can choose the colour. There is a bar below the palette that allows you to adjust the brightness. Simple to operate, Cube26 has added a few pre-defined modes too, in which the bulb changes colour accordingly. There is a reading mode that makes the room bright, whereas in the candle light mode, the bulb starts flickering like a candle would. Apart from the pre-defined modes, there is an option to create your own modes by choosing colours. But there the app needs some more work. The IOTA Lite also has a music sync feature where the bulb changes colour and glows according to the beats of the song. IOTA Lite has additional features such as call alert, SMS alert, and can also react according to the weather outside.

**EXPERIENCE:** Using IOTA Lite was a delight because, be it pairing or changing colours, everything could be done with a single touch on the app. I could read comfortably using the reading mode and with guests coming over, I chose the party mode. Most importantly, I was able to replace my night lamp with the IOTA Lite, because I was able to select a more soothing blue colour with very low brightness. For turning off the bulb, there wasn't any need to get up from my bed – the app handled this part as well. It has a range of up to 15 metres for operating the bulb from the smartphone.

**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:** For ₹1,499 (introductory price) on Flipkart, IOTA Lite is a great buy for those who wish to experience mood lighting



**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:** Will give tough competition to the Moto G 3rd Gen



# A Good Deal

Home-grown brand Micromax has got some great devices in its Canvas range. The company has now launched the next flagship smartphone at a very competitive price.

**DESIGN:** The Canvas 5 has got a premium feel to it and doesn't look like a ₹11,999 smartphone. It has a metal frame with curved edges and the back panel bears a faux finish. With the




## MICROMAX CANVAS 5
**₹11,999**

**Plus:** Design, Display, Performance

**Minus:** Camera

5.2-inch display, Micromax has nailed the size of this smartphone that makes it really comfortable to grip this smartphone. Volume control and power key are placed on the right edge, making the left edge look clean. Auxiliary port is on the top and the microUSB for charging at the bottom. The back panel is removable, hiding the two SIM slots and the memory card slot. The battery, however, is non-removable.

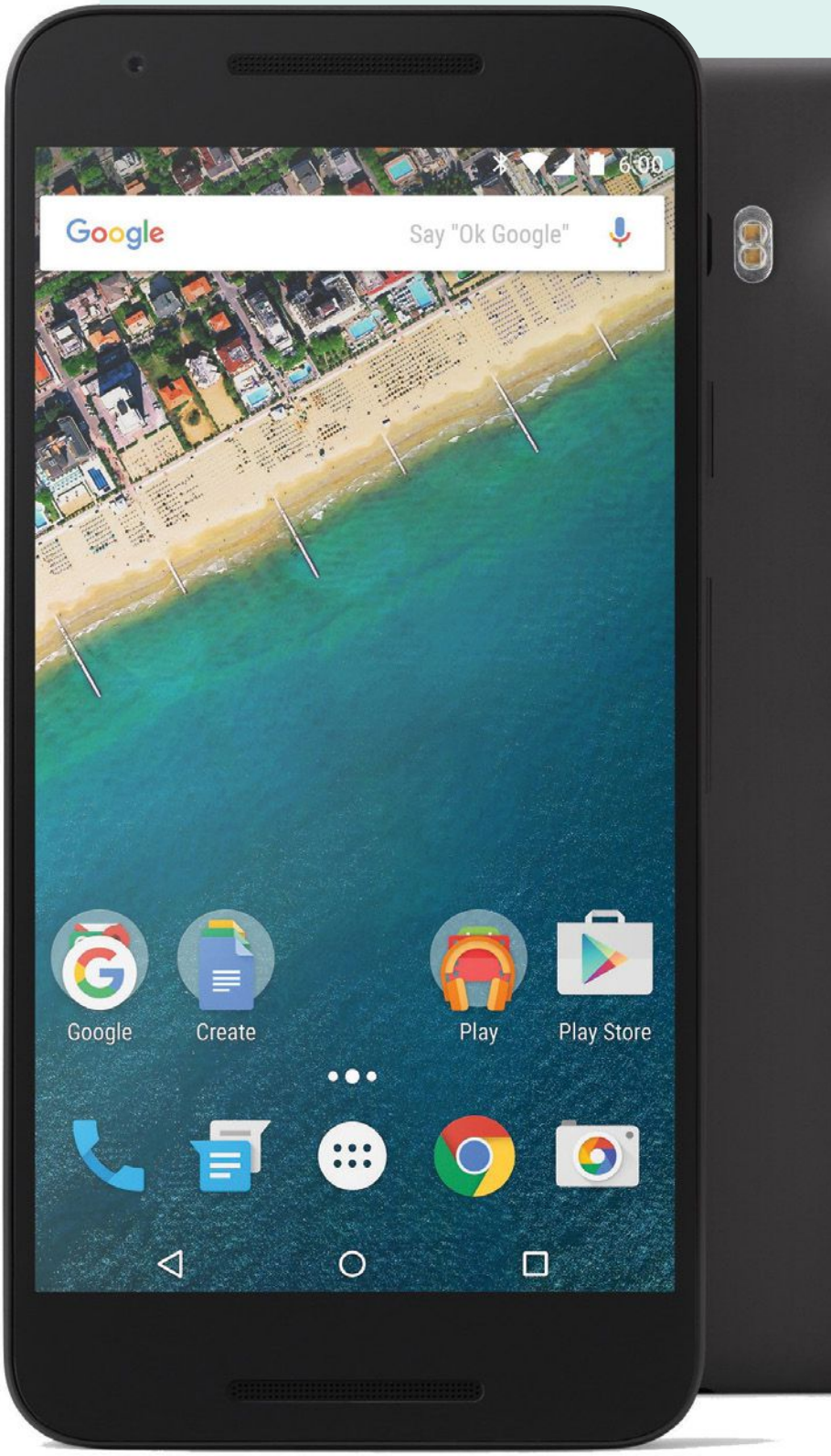
**DISPLAY:** Micromax has added a full HD display to the Canvas 5, which is novel in the under-₹15,000 price category. The full HD display is great to look at. The colours appear bright and vivid; has good viewing angles too. The text appears crisp. The black levels were excellent. Even the touch response was superb, but it does attract a few finger impressions.

**PERFORMANCE:** This is one department where the Canvas 5 managed to score full marks. Micromax has added a custom UI based on Android Lollipop operating system and there isn't any app tray. All the apps are placed on the homescreens. Swiping between the homescreens wasere quick and so was switching between the multiple running apps. It has got a 1.3 GHz octa-core processor, which has been paired with 3 GB of RAM. This handles all heavy usage tasks such as multitasking or playing heavy-graphic games. While most smartphones heat up after continuous usage or while running power-hungry apps, Canvas 5 doesn't.

**CAMERA:** A camera is one of the most used features of a smartphone. And for this, Micromax has equipped the Canvas 5 with a 13 MP rear camera and a 5 MP front-facing camera. The camera locks the focus instantly and offers good images in bright day light. But indoor images tend to have some noise visible on the smartphone itself. When zoomed in on a bigger screen, the noise increases and images lack details. Overall, this one has an average camera.

**BATTERY:** The biggest problem in a smartphone is its battery life. In that regard, the Canvas 5 manages to survive a day with usage spanning calls, e-mails, social networking and camera. It packs in a 2,900 mAh non-removable battery.

# Falling Short




Google's Nexus smartphones have been a great combination of hardware as well as the software. This year, Google has announced two new smartphones – the LG Nexus 5X and the Huawei P6. Here's our impression of the former, the Nexus 5X.

**LOOKS:** At first, the Nexus 5 looked like a beautiful piece of hardware, but my opinion changed when I held it in my hand. LG has added a fine, soft plastic rear to the Nexus 5X, which renders a rubbery feel to it. My review unit in white didn't impress me in the looks department. The power and volume keys are on the right panel, while the USB Type C port is at the bottom. The camera module at the rear has a slight hump. There is a circular fingerprint scanner sitting just below the camera. The Nexus 5X weighs 136 grams and is easy to hold.

**DISPLAY:** The Nexus 5X packs in a 5.2-inch full HD display with Gorilla Glass 3 protection. It has got 424 ppi pixel density which makes everything appear crisp and sharp.

**UI AND PERFORMANCE:** Nexus




**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:** A good piece of hardware from Google, but overpriced

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NEXUS 5X

**₹28,899 for 16 GB**

**Plus:** Android Marshmallow, Camera

**Minus:** Battery

smartphones are about experiencing the Android operating system system and the Nexus 5X is one of the first smartphones to come with the latest Android Marshmallow. The look of the OS hasn't changed much. All the apps are placed in one window and you will have to scroll downwards to access them. The company has also added a separate row on the top, showing the regularly used apps for which you don't have to scroll down. The search bar at the top allows you to look for the apps directly in the Google Play store. There is also a Nexus Imprint Fingerprint set-up that allows you to set up a fingerprint to unlock the phone. Using the Nexus 5X was a pleasant experience as it was a no-nonsense device. It handled all the tasks with ease – be it browsing the web, watching YouTube videos or playing games. There wasn't any lag while switching between the multiple running apps. The Nexus 5X is powered by a Qualcomm 808 processor and is paired with 2 GB of RAM.

**CAMERA:** LG has added a 12.3 MP camera with laser auto-focus and dual LED flash to the Nexus 5X, that does a decent job. On paper, it has a 1.55 micron pixel and an f/2.0 aperture that allows it to capture more light when capturing images under low light conditions. The images captured from this smartphone are good and offer great details. The low light imaging isn't the best, but is still better than what most smartphones in this price range offer. The 5 MP front-facing camera manages to capture wide selfies.

**BATTERY:** The 2,700 mAh battery could barely last a day with my usage spanning e-mail, social networking, web browsing and a few minutes of camera usage. Google has added a Type C port which means you will have to carry the charger with you all the time.

# The Best Nexus?

Since the launch of Nexus hardware in India, Android fans get to choose between Nexus smartphones and other Android offerings from various manufacturers. This year's Nexus portfolio has two smartphones – Nexus 5X and Nexus 6P. The Nexus 6P is slightly more expensive than the 5X, but at ₹39,990, is it the best Nexus smartphone?

**DESIGN:** Manufactured by Huawei, the Nexus 6P has a sleek, full metal body. Despite the metal body and 5.7-inch display, the Nexus 6P only weighs 178 grams. It has curved edges and the slight cut design on the side panels makes it comfortable to hold. There are two metal strips on the top and bottom of the display for speakers. Power key and volume controls are on the right panel, auxiliary port on the top, SIM card tray on the left and the USB-Type C charging port at the bottom. There aren't any physical keys below the display. Instead, the home key, back key and multitasking key all pop up on the display. There is a raised camera module at the rear followed by a circular fingerprint scanner. On the design front, it definitely scores full marks.

**PERFORMANCE:** The Nexus 6P is a great device in terms of




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NEXUS 6P
**₹39,990**

**Plus:** Camera, Performance

**Minus:** Heats up, Battery




**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:** One of the best Nexus smartphones I have used till date

performance. It works on Android Marshmallow and the overall interface looks neat. All the apps in the app tray are placed on one single page. One has to slide the window upwards to access mode app icons. There is a row for often used apps on the top and I was able to search for the apps and the app store from the search bar in the app tray. The Nexus 6P is powered by Qualcomm Snapdragon 810 processor and is paired with 3 GB of RAM. It smartly handles graphic-heavy games such as Asphalt Racing and many more. It smartly handles full HD video streaming too and switches between multiple running apps with ease. The only problem with the Nexus 6P is its heating issue. The phone heats up while navigating and playing graphic-heavy games. The fingerprint scanner at the rear works like a breeze. At times, I ended up unlocking the phone while just holding it in the hand.

**CAMERA:** The camera module at the rear of the Nexus 6P is an attention grabber. On a silver metal body, there is a black glass raised hump housing the 12.3 MP rear camera. It has the Sony sensor and comes with laser auto focus. The camera of the Nexus 6P is worth praising as it manages to capture rich and sharp images. The colours look natural, but at times it does over-expose a few images. Low-light photography is just about average. You can also rely on HDR mode to shoot images. It can also capture 4k videos at 30 frames per second. The video quality is good and the sound is neatly captured. There is also an 8 MP front-facing camera which captures great selfies.

**BATTERY:** With the 3,450 mAh battery on board, the Nexus 6P just managed to last me a day with average use. If you are a heavy user, you will have to carry the charger all the time. Like the Nexus 5X, its charging cable has the Type C port on both the ends. But, thankfully, the company has added a USB cable with Type C charging port to the box that helps in transferring data from the PC to the smartphone and vice versa.




# Pocket Friendly

Acer, a well-known name in the computing space, has been trying its luck in the smartphone space for quite some time now. The company has, yet again, launched a budget smartphone, the Liquid Z530 for ₹6,999, which will compete against the offerings from Micromax, Yureka and others.

The Liquid Z530 is a simple looking smartphone with a 5-inch HD display with 720x1280p resolution. Everything appears sharp and crisp on this smartphone. While an HD display seems a bit less, we are not complaining considering its price. Irrespective of a 5-inch display, the Z530 is extremely comfortable to hold in one hand. While I find it difficult to slide in a 5.5-inch phablet in my jeans pocket, this one fits. However, the power key on the top right was a bit difficult to reach when held in the right hand (for single-hand operation) and I feared dropping the phone. The rear of the Z530 has an 8 MP camera module on the top and DTS surround sound speaker at the bottom.

Running on the Android Lollipop operating system, it comes with a customised skin. The UI isn't bad, yet I prefer the stock Android interface. While I got used to the Acer UI, I installed Nova launcher and was shuffling




**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:**
A good budget phone; its camera and UI are a let-down

G&G ●●●●○

ACER LIQUID Z530
**₹6,999**

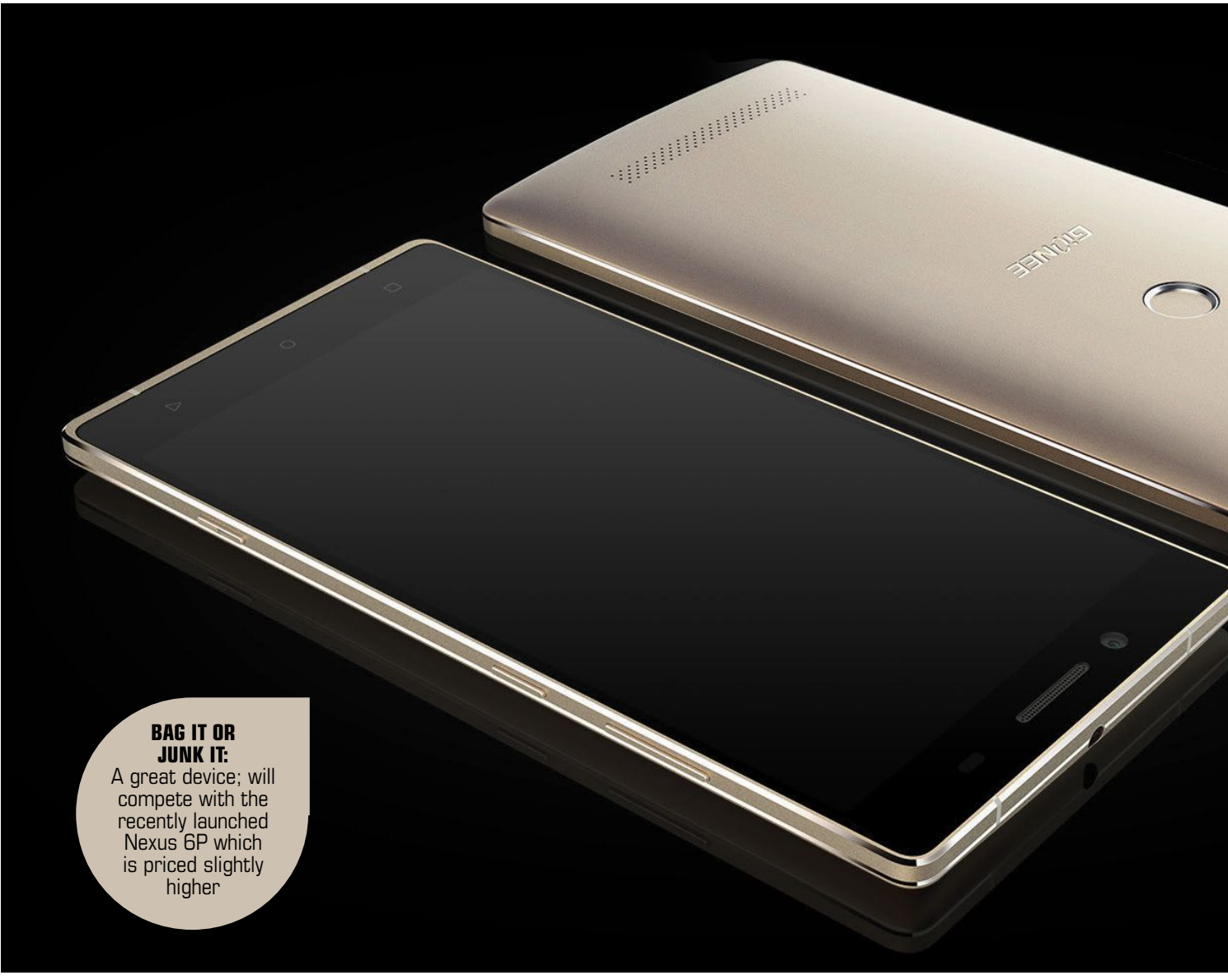
**Plus:** Price, Performance

**Minus:** Camera

between the two. The phone does basic tasks without any hiccups. I was able to browse the web, stream YouTube videos and play games such as Candy Crush and Temple Run without any lag. However, it did freeze a couple of times while playing graphic-heavy games, such as Asphalt Racing, owing to its 1.3 GHz quad-core MediaTek MT 6735 processor paired with 2 GB of RAM. Acer has added a Kids Centre to the Z530 that filters pre-installed apps and brings them together. So you need not worry about the other apps when kids are playing on your phone. On the multimedia front, the 8 MP rear camera took a lot of time to focus on the subject. The colours too were not very accurate. The sound output of the DTS speaker at the rear was good.

The 2,420 mAh battery onboard is impressive; lasted me over a day on a single charge.

# For a Premium



**BAG IT OR JUNK IT:**
A great device; will compete with the recently launched Nexus 6P which is priced slightly higher

GIONEE E8
₹34,999

**Plus:** Display, Camera

**Minus:** Battery, Weight



Since its launch in India a couple of years ago, Gionee has been offering some great devices at competitive pricing. But its latest flagship, the ELife E8 at ₹34,999 is the company's most expensive offering in India till date. Can the Gionee E8 take on competition?

**DISPLAY AND DESIGN:** The Gionee E8 doesn't look like any of its predecessors. It has a premium design. The display size has been increased from 5.5 inches (as on the E7) to 6 inches and a 2k display over the full HD display, which makes everything look good and bright. It has great viewing angles too. There is a metallic frame added to the sides and the curved corners compliment the design. The sides are neat – the power key, volume button and the dedicated camera key have all been added to the right panel. The E8 has got a fingerprint scanner too, which has been placed at the rear panel, just below the camera module. Gionee has done a good job with the rear panel; even though made of plastic, it doesn't feel like one. Overall, the E8 is slightly a bit too big to hold, at least for my hand. At 210 grams, it is a heavy phone.

**CAMERA:** The highlight of the E8 is its 24 MP rear camera with features such as Optical Image Stabilisation and modes including Touch Focus, Face/Smile Detection, Panorama, HDR, Professional, Magic Focus, Face Beauty and Pic Note. The UltraPixel mode can be used to capture images at 120 MP resolution, at five-times higher resolution. The images captured in the normal mode are impressive. It offers great colours and details. However, in low light, there is visible noise, but the dual LED flash comes to the rescue. There is also a pro mode in which one can further adjust focus and exposure. For selfies, there is an 8 MP camera that does a decent job.

**PERFORMANCE:** Thanks to the big and bright display, I enjoyed watching movies and playing games on the E8. It handles basic functionality such as fetching e-mails, browsing the web and streaming videos from YouTube, without crashing or slowing down. It is powered by a 2 GHz octa-core processor and is paired with 3 GB of RAM, which pushes it enough to perform. Gionee smartphones come loaded with custom UI and the one on E8 is Amigo 3.1 interface based on Android 5.1. There isn't any app tray; all the apps are scattered on the homescreens. The phone has a fingerprint scanner at the rear, which is becoming common these days. It is quick and accurate. One good thing about the Gionee E8 is the 64 GB internal storage which can be further expanded up to 128 GB. This is a dual SIM smartphone and has got LTE support.

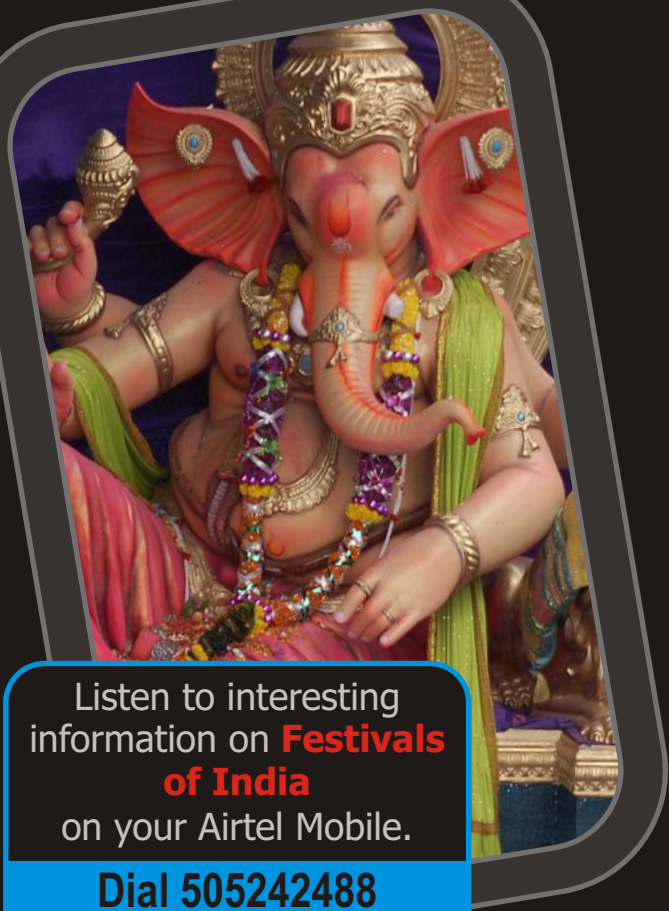
**BATTERY:** Even with the 3,500 mAh battery on board, the E8 only lasts a day. Lower the brightness and it will last slightly longer.

**ONLINE ONLY:** Until now, Gionee was launching all its smartphones through offline retail, but the E8 will be available exclusively on Snapdeal. It has been priced on the higher side too.

# India Today brings

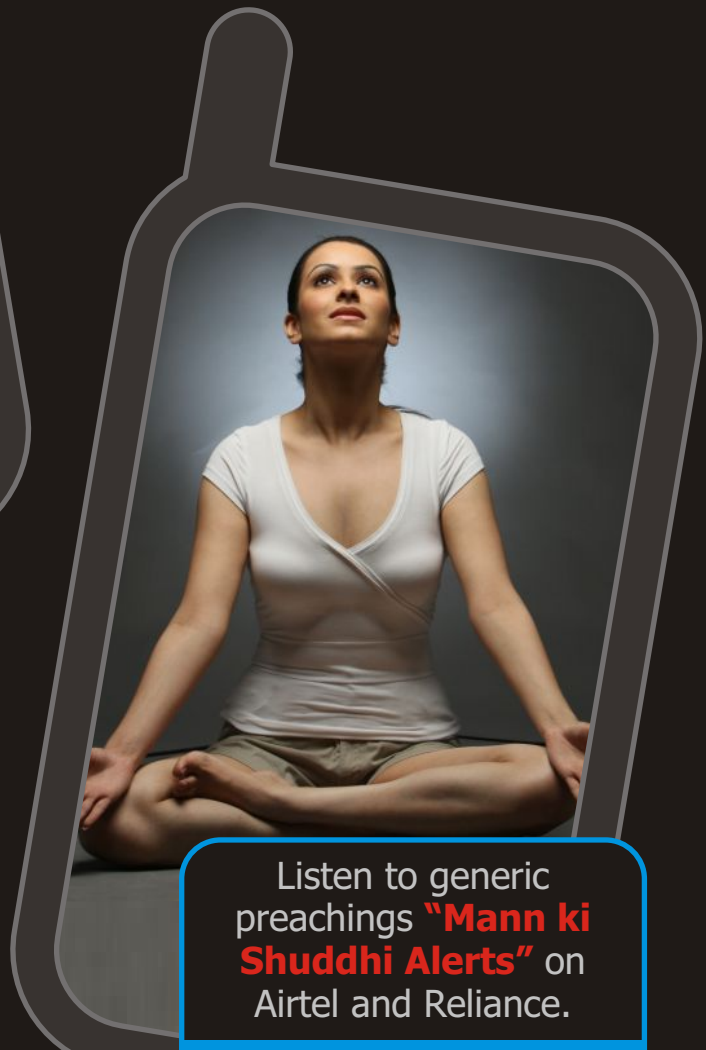
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